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ABSTRACT

This manual was developed to assist citizens seeking alcohol warning posters wherever alcoholic beverages are sold. Warning posters can include health information about drinking during pregnancy, the danger of using alcohol while driving or using machinery, or alcohol dependency and addiction. Warning posters are now required in cities such as New York and Philadelphia and in Maine and California. This guide therefore gives advice to activists interested in seeking timely legislation, describes warning poster laws, and provides strategies for obtaining health messages in bars, restaurants, and liquor stores. This manual also provides information on where to put warning signs, how to prepare a warning poster law, how to build a successful coalition, how to push for legislation educating the public, how to use the media to educate society, and how to develop a press list and press release. A list of national organizations interested in alcoholic problems and fetal alcohol syndrome warning signs and poster law is appended. (BHK).

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HEALTH WARNING:
ALCOHOL IN BEER WINE & LIQUOR CAN CAUSE
• INTOXICATION
• ADDICTION
• BIRTH DEFECTS
REDUCE YOUR RISKS
WARNING
DRINKING ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES DURING PREGNANCY CAN CAUSE BIRTH DEFECTS
WARNING
DRINKING ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES DURING PREGNANCY CAN CAUSE BIRTH DEFECTS

Alcohol Warning Posters:
How to Get Legislation Passed in Your City

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Alcohol Warning Posters:

How to Get Legislation Passed in Your City

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Acknowledgements

In 1985, CSPI published *Alcohol Warning Signs: How to Get Legislation Passed in Your City*. We have produced this new, updated edition to provide information on the expanding use of warning posters across the nation. We would like to especially thank Laura M. Boustani who revised the copy. We would also like to acknowledge Sheila Blume, David Cleary, Jim Shultz, and Rick Kritzer for their work on this issue. Finally, we thank Wendy Sharp and Bill Dugan for producing it and Stephen Schmidt for reviewing it.

Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) is a non-profit organization that advocates progressive public health policies. It has led efforts to improve alcohol policies regarding labels and warnings on alcohol beverage containers, advertising, and excise taxes.

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Preface

Ethyl alcohol (the "active" ingredient in alcoholic beverages) is a unique substance. It is at the same time a food, a drug, and a poison. Alcohol is a food in the sense that it provides energy, although its calories are seldom accompanied by the vitamins and other essential nutrients needed for health. Alcohol is a drug in that it alters the way people think, feel, and react. Drinking enough of the drug alcohol can lead to unconsciousness, coma, and death. And it is the drug properties of alcohol that lead to alcohol addiction in some drinkers. Finally, alcohol is a poison in that it interferes with many of the body's metabolic functions. Heavy drinking is a major cause of diseases of the stomach, liver, pancreas, heart, nervous system, and many other parts of the body. All told, alcohol consumption is a factor in approximately 100,000 deaths a year in the United States, playing a role in a range of fatal events, from homicide and suicide to stroke and cancer. One of the most important areas of scientific study is the toxic effect of alcohol on the developing fetus.

Ideas about drinking and pregnancy have changed radically during the past few years. In a book entitled *Life Before Birth*, published in 1964, Ashley Montague wrote:

> Unexpectedly, alcohol in the form of beverages, even in immoderate amounts, has no apparent effect on a child before birth . . . . It can now be stated categorically, after hundreds of studies covering many years, that no matter how great the amounts of alcohol taken by the mother – or by the father, for that matter – neither the germ cells nor the development of the child will be affected . . . . An amount of alcohol in the blood that would kill the mother is not enough even to irritate the tissues of the child.

That was standard teaching only thirty years ago. Actually, the kinds of studies that might have proved alcohol's safety, or lack of it, had not been performed. It was not until the early 1970s, with the publication of a study by Jones, Smith, and Ulleland in the medical journal *The Lancet*, that the serious study of drinking during pregnancy began.

Because knowledge about the serious toxic effects of alcohol on the developing human fetus is so recent, the danger of drinking during pregnancy is not now part of common knowledge. It is something that must be learned: either in school, from a physician or nurse, or via public education sources. Warning posters and warning labels are an important part of the public education effort.

I have had the pleasure and pain of giving testimony in more than one legislative forum on the subject of health warnings for alcoholic beverages. Opponents present arguments on the general theme that such warnings are not effective. "A label won't cure alcoholism. It won't stop an alcoholic from drinking!" Certainly, the purpose of a health warning is not to substitute for needed treatment. Its purpose is to inform; to make the information it contains part of the common knowledge.

After all, we don't have to go to school to learn that overeating makes a person gain weight. Doctors know about it long before they embark upon their medical training. It is common knowledge. The fact that alcohol can cause birth defects should be equally well known, so that a person who missed the public service announcement on television will not be uninformed. And although a health warning can't cure an alcoholic, the information that a pregnant woman who drinks to excess is jeopardizing the health of her child is a strong motivating force, both for the alcoholic woman and for those who love her, to seek treatment and to follow through.

Just as the facts about alcohol in pregnancy are not yet part of the common knowledge, the concept that alcohol is a mind-altering drug, capable of producing addiction, is also not well understood. Governments declare "war on drugs" but leave out alcohol. Parents react to a teenage daughter drinking

wine coolers by feeling relieved that "at least she's not on drugs," while alcohol remains the most serious drug of use and abuse among teens.

In a nutshell, that is why I support health warnings about alcoholic beverages and why I hope you will do so too. In addition, as each community finds a way to take action on health warnings, it will build a coalition which will be able to influence other important alcohol-related health policies in that community. So I thank CSPI for producing this guide for action, and wish you all good fortune. The job will not be easy, but it will be rewarding.

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Foreword

This manual is designed to assist citizens seeking alcohol warning posters wherever alcoholic beverages are sold. Warning posters may include health information about drinking during pregnancy, the danger of using alcohol while driving or using machinery, and alcohol dependency and addiction. Warning posters are now required in cities like New York and Philadelphia, in many counties, and in a number of states, including Maine and California. This manual includes suggested language, background material, and strategies for enacting legislation requiring comprehensive health messages.

The groundwork has been laid for expanding the use of warning posters across the nation. In some places where posters warn only about the dangers of drinking during pregnancy, campaigns are under way to give consumers other health information – for example, that alcohol is a potentially addictive drug.

This manual updates *Alcohol Warning Signs: How to Get Legislation Passed in Your City*, which was published in 1985. We hope it is useful to you and other activists in your community. Please keep us apprised of your efforts, so that others may benefit from your experiences.

Why Warning Posters About Alcohol Are Needed

Drinking alcoholic beverages is associated with a wide range of serious health hazards, including birth defects, impaired motor skills, adverse drug reactions, premature death due to liver damage, hypertension, and cancer. Alcohol costs our society far more than all other drugs combined, including tobacco. More than 100,000 Americans die each year from alcohol-related causes. Millions of Americans are addicted to alcohol, including almost four million young people. Alcohol-related car crashes are the leading killer of Americans aged 15 to 34.

The dangers of drinking are well documented, but are not well known to the public. For example, a nonsmoker who drinks between one and three drinks a day has a 60 percent higher risk of oral cancer than a nonsmoker who doesn't drink.

As a matter of fact, because of their number, moderate drinkers are responsible for more than half of all alcohol-related deaths. We've provided some background information below on some specific health risks.

Alcohol Advertising

Each year the alcoholic beverage industry spends over $2 billion advertising and promoting beer, wine, coolers, and liquor. These advertisements tell consumers that drinking is glamorous and essential to a successful life. But there's another side of the story – one the public needs to know more about.

Getting health information about drinking to the public is crucial. Placing warning posters at the point of purchase of alcoholic beverages is an effective way to do that. They complement and reinforce other education and prevention programs, including the federal law that requires a warning label on all alcoholic beverage containers.

Health information is critical for all Americans, whether they drink heavily, lightly, or not at all. Alcohol problems affect the families and communities of drinkers and non-drinkers alike. One year after warning posters about drinking during pregnancy were posted in New York City, a Gallup poll showed a 19 percent rise in awareness among both sexes of the danger of drinking during pregnancy.

Facts About Alcohol Problems

- Alcohol-related birth defects are the leading preventable cause of birth defects in the U.S.
- Each year an estimated 40,000 children are born at risk of fetal alcohol syndrome. Another 50,000 children suffer from fetal alcohol effects.
- Approximately 18 million American adults are problem drinkers.
- Almost 5 million young people are dependent on alcohol or are problem drinkers.
- In 1989, alcohol-related motor vehicle crashes caused 45,555 deaths and about 345,000 injuries.
- 9,429 young people between the ages of 16 and 20 were killed in alcohol-related automobile crashes in 1989. More than 43% of all 16- to 20-year-old deaths result from motor vehicle crashes, and an estimated 48% of these fatalities were in alcohol-related crashes. Alcohol-related crashes are the leading cause of death for Americans aged 15 to 34.

- The average age at which young people begin drinking is 13. By then, approximately 30 percent of boys and 22 percent of girls classify themselves as "drinkers." Studies demonstrate that the use of alcohol before the age of 15 is one of the indicators of later heavy alcohol and other drug use.

- Alcohol use in combination with other drugs is the second most frequent cause of drug-related medical crisis in the United States.

- Children of alcoholics are four times as likely as children of non-alcoholics to develop alcoholism.

- Nearly half of all suicides, homicides, and accidental deaths are alcohol-related.

- Alcohol is a major factor in incidents of child and spouse abuse.

- Alcohol promotes hypertension, liver cirrhosis, certain cancers, and other diseases.

For additional information about alcohol problems, you can contact the organizations listed in Appendix A. Many of them provide background information on alcohol-related health problems.

Alcohol-Related Birth Defects

Drinking alcohol during pregnancy – even in moderate amounts – can cause serious injury to the fetus. In 1981, the U.S. Surgeon General alerted women who are pregnant – or even considering pregnancy – to abstain from drinking because of the risk of mental retardation and birth defects. One in six women in the peak childbearing years (18 to 34) may drink enough, either chronically or occasionally, to present a hazard to the fetus.

In 1973, the first research identifying fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS) – a pattern of mental, physical, and behavioral

defects associated with a pregnant woman's alcohol consumption – was published. These birth defects can include facial disfiguration, small head and body size, and varying degrees of mental retardation. Expectant mothers who drink heavily are also subject to increased incidences of stillbirths and spontaneous abortions. Alcohol use during pregnancy can also result in children with fetal alcohol effects (FAE). This includes growth retardation and other birth defects that fall short of the full complement of FAS symptoms.

FAS is the third leading cause of mental retardation due to birth defects. And, of the top three, it is the only cause that is completely preventable. The Department of Health and Human Services estimates that it costs more than $300 million each year to care for Americans with FAS.

Warning Posters

In many states, cities, and counties, posters warning of the dangers of drinking are now required wherever alcoholic beverages are served or sold. Warning posters can cover a broad range of alcohol-related health problems.

A number of the existing laws use the following language:

> "Drinking alcoholic beverages during pregnancy can cause birth defects."

In Florida, a message about other health risks reads:

> **HEALTH WARNING**: Alcohol In Beer, Wine & Liquor Can Cause Intoxication, Addiction, Birth Defects.

> **REDUCE YOUR RISKS**: Do not drink before driving or operating machinery. Do not mix alcohol with other drugs. (It can be fatal). Do not drink during pregnancy.

In Utah, posters carrying the following message have been required since 1978:

> **WARNING**: The consumption of alcoholic beverages purchased in this establishment may be hazardous to your health and the safety of others.

In California, under Proposition 65 (the Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986), another message reads:

> **WARNING**: Drinking distilled spirits, beer, coolers, wine and other alcoholic beverages may increase cancer risk, and, during pregnancy, can cause birth defects.

You may want to consider warnings that give consumers even more information about specific risks. Or, you may want to require the addition of a toll-free number that people can call for more information. Below are some *sample* health messages:

> **WARNING:** The National Cancer Institute warns that if you drink alcohol and smoke, your risk of getting mouth and throat cancer increases.

> **WARNING**: Drinking beer, wine, liquor, and other alcoholic beverages may become addictive. If you know someone who has an alcohol or other drug problem or has trouble controlling his or her drinking, call (fill in a local phone number for referrals).

Where to Put Warning Posters

In general, warning posters are required wherever alcoholic beverages are sold. The Washington, D.C. statute is typical. It defines a "vendor" as "any person who owns or operates a business establishment that sells at retail any alcoholic beverage for consumption either on or off the premises." This includes bars, liquor stores, restaurants, convenience stores, grocery stores, and hotels.

All statutes have one requirement in common: at least one sign must be posted in a conspicuous place. Other statutes can – and should – go much further. In California, for example, warning posters are often posted in restaurant restrooms, which increases the chances for them to be seen and read.

In many places, the city health department is the agency responsible for carrying out the law. It distributes the posters, and sometimes monitors establishments to make sure that they are displayed. Poster sizes vary, but generally they are 8 ½" x 11". In drafting a bill, you may want to require larger posters, and/or a requirement that more than one poster be displayed in each establishment. You should also require a regular monitoring program.

Preparing to Pass a Warning Poster Law

Any organization or community activist concerned about the health effects of alcohol can help organize a state or local coalition to pass a law requiring warning posters. Coalition members might include public health agencies, state and county medical societies, religious organizations, law enforcement agencies, drunk driving activists, local alcoholism councils, and PTAs.

The goal is to involve as broad-based an alliance as possible. One of the most challenging and rewarding experiences of building a coalition is working with people who have never before worked together.

Working in coalition, you will be better able to determine the state of affairs in your community, to pool resources and knowledge from experts in many areas, to divide the workload, and to ignite the enthusiasm of people who may be concerned, but who are overworked or discouraged by their experiences.

It is important that the coalition members have regular opportunities to discuss their perspectives on issues and problems regarding the health effects of alcohol. The development of a statement of purpose will help focus the philosophy and work of the coalition.

How to Build a Successful Coalition

- Be clear about the mission of the coalition and stick closely to it. Individual groups can pursue their other special interests on their own.
- Devise a committee structure that encourages members to rotate as leaders of the coalition.
- Develop clear short-term and long-term goals for the coalition.
- Make the coalition visible in the community. Two proven methods are to develop liaisons with agencies that serve women and their children, and to hold a press conference or legislative briefing at the county or state level.
- Design products that will be useful to coalition members. A few examples are position statements, newsletters, or a resource list about available services.
- Encourage coalition members to contribute based on their own organizational perspective. Each coalition member has expertise that should be acknowledged and used.

It is important to garner support from organizations and individuals that represent different parts of your community. That includes civic and business leaders, the publisher or editor

of your local newspaper, and elected officials. Others who you might urge to support your campaign are:

- neighborhood associations and other community groups,
- religious leaders and congregations,
- doctors, public health officials, and other health-care providers, and
- children's hospitals.

Push for Legislation to Educate the Public

Decide on what type of legislation your coalition wants to support and draft a bill that can be used to interest a potential sponsor. Once a coalition is formed, its first activity should be to agree upon and draft a bill that can be used to interest a potential sponsor in the legislature or City or County Council.

Fortunately, these kinds of laws are simple and straightforward. You should review legislation that has been passed by other counties and states. Also, contact legislators for copies of the laws and background materials in those states with statutes you would like to see enacted in your area. (See Appendix B for some examples.)

If you have already lined up a sponsor, he or she might be interested in helping draft a bill. If any case, the sponsor will probably have your draft bill checked by the city attorney or legislative counsel.

Each organization in your coalition should encourage its members to write letters and call key legislators. You should also solicit additional letters of support from medical and health experts, as well as from influential people and organizations who are not coalition members. At a public hearing on the bill, these letters can be entered into the record as further support for your bill.

Once you've drafted a bill, you're ready for the next step – publicizing it.

Use the Media to Educate and Inform

Good press coverage is an essential part of getting legislation passed. Newspaper articles, television news and talk shows, and other publicity will generate citizen involvement. Most importantly, favorable news coverage wins votes.

There are many ways you can use the media. You and other coalition members can send letters-to-the-editor, which point out the dangerous omission of alcohol from the "war on drugs." You can work with reporters to develop a feature story on local experts who deal with alcohol-related birth defects. You can issue a report on the influence of alcohol advertising on young people. Remember to emphasize *local* problems and *local* issues.

Press coverage, in any form, is a critical tool for educating the public about the hazards of drinking alcohol and the need for warning posters.

Develop a Press List

The bible of any media campaign is the press list. It includes the names, addresses, and phone numbers of all the reporters you work with and would like to reach. Keep notes about their areas of interest, deadlines, and any other information that will help establish and maintain your relationship. Contact reporters who cover health issues. If you don't know who they are, just call the newspapers, TV and radio stations, and wire service offices and ask for the name of their health reporter. Call organizations that do work similar to yours and ask if they can suggest any media contacts. Soon you'll have a working press list. Update it regularly.

Press Releases

The best way to let the media know what you're doing is to issue press releases. Writing a press release is simple. Just follow these guidelines:

- Type it double-spaced on legal- or letter-sized paper with wide margins. Use coalition letterhead if possible.

- Type "Press Release" or "News Release" at the top.

- In the upper-right corner, single space the name and address of your organization and the name and phone number of a contact person.

- In the upper-left corner, put the date and time that your story may be used by the media: (If you are describing an event that is happening on a specific day, that will be the release date. Most often your press release will be "For Immediate Release").

- Always include information about your coalition. Identify some of the key groups and, if possible, get quotes from spokespersons from them.

- Mail the press release three or four days before the release date. It helps to use envelopes with the words "Press Release" printed in large type on them.

The beginning of your press release must be attention grabbing. If it isn't, busy reporters aren't going to read it. Start with the most important and interesting fact. Then add the who, what, where, when, and why. Fill the rest of the release with supporting details and quotes. Comments from local experts or activists make a release more appealing.

A day or two after you send out your press release, call reporters to be sure they received it. Some reporters receive hundreds of press releases, so it is important to make these follow-up phone calls. Ask the reporters if they have any questions. Be prepared. It doesn't hurt to practice ahead of time. You want to establish the trust of the media so that they will come to rely on you as a source of information for their stories.

Here's a sample press release that can be used in a warning poster campaign:

SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

Contact: Jane Smith
(202) 555-1111

Citizens Call for Alcohol Warning Posters

At a press conference in the state capitol's largest liquor store, Senator Concerned announced that she will introduce a bill requiring alcohol warning posters today. Parent, health, alcoholism and civic groups joined the Senator in calling for the warnings.

The bill will require warning posters on the dangers of drinking alcohol during pregnancy and the addictive nature of alcohol everywhere alcoholic beverages are sold in the state – restaurants, bars, and liquor stores.

The posters will inform consumers about Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS). FAS is the leading preventable cause of birth defects with accompanying mental retardation. The posters will also state that beer, wine, and liquor can be addictive.

"People do not know about the dangers of drinking during pregnancy," said Senator Concerned. "Warning posters will provide citizens in the state of Mississippi with crucial health information."

The Coalition for Alcohol Warning Posters, consisting of over 20 health, parent, and religious organizations, is working in support of warning posters. According to Coalition member Dr. Betty Smith, "It's plain and simple – posters are desperately needed. Despite the fact that alcohol costs us far more than all other drugs combined, critical health information just isn't out there. Warning posters will let people know of the importance of abstaining from all alcoholic beverages during pregnancy."

The Coalition is holding town meetings, writing letters and making phone calls to support the new bill. The Coalition's goal is to prevent the alcohol problems that are destroying our nation's health and the health of our children.

- 30 -

Editorial Board Meetings

As your campaign progresses, you may want to set up a meeting with editorial boards of local radio and TV stations and newspapers.

Convene a small group of advocates from a variety of organizations. Decide ahead of time what your main point is. When you call the editorial staff, be prepared to explain your story, why it is significant and timely, and why it is relevant to your community. If they are interested, set up a date to visit their offices. When you go, bring along materials, like fact sheets, newspaper clippings, and sample warning posters, which will help illustrate your case. Present your position forcefully, but don't overstate it.

Letters to the Editor

A 1984 study showed that more people read the Letters to the Editor than any other part of the editorial page. A letter is a great way to get information about your bill to the public at no cost.

Every single alcohol and other drug-related article that appears in your local paper provides you with an opportunity to respond – be it to praise, criticize, or add more information. Your letter should:

- be no longer than one page, single-spaced, with your name, signature, and organization at the bottom,
- be sent or hand-delivered no more than a day or two after the article appeared, and
- mention the name of the local or state official who can do something about your issue.

Local and state officials monitor every mention of their names in the media. Mentioning them in your letter is a way to draw their attention to your issue.

Here's a copy of a sample letter that can be used in a warning poster campaign.

SAMPLE LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor:

Each year over 100,000 Americans die from alcohol-related causes. Approximately 18 million American adults are problem drinkers. And each year an estimated 40,000 children are born at risk of fetal alcohol syndrome.

Yet you'd never know about these and other risks if you watch the ads on TV. The alcoholic beverage industry spends over $2 billion a year advertising and promoting its products. Instead of learning about the dangers, we learn about how glamorous and appealing drinking is.

That's why we need to get out the other side of the story. Senator Concerned recently introduced Senate Bill 1234, a bill that will require alcohol warning posters in bars, liquor stores, and restaurants. The posters will warn about alcohol-related birth defects, and that alcohol is a drug.

Alcohol-related birth defects can be prevented. Posters will provide people with crucial health information about the link between drinking alcohol and birth defects.

Write your Senator today and ask him or her to join us in supporting Senate Bill 1234. At a minimum, we need to provide consumers with information. Let's take that first step for the sake of our health and the health of our children.

Coalition on Alcohol Warning Posters

Counter Opposing Arguments

In lobbying council members or state legislators, or in testifying at public hearings on the bill, it is important to anticipate and refute your opponents' arguments. As a general rule, you can expect industry opposition from the restaurant

and beverage association, as well as from and national and local liquor, wine, and beer manufacturers and their trade associations.

In most cities where warning poster bills have been considered, a producer or distributor of alcoholic beverages has testified against it. In the District of Columbia, for example, Miller Brewing Company testified against the legislation. In Columbus, Ohio, Anheuser-Busch showed up, and in New York, many of the large liquor manufacturers and trade associations testified.

Myths and Facts

Common industry objections to warning posters include:

MYTH: Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) occurs only in the offspring of heavy drinkers, who are least likely to seek help after seeing warning posters.

FACT: Warning posters do have a substantial indirect impact on heavy drinkers. According to Dr. Sheila Blume who has treated problem drinkers while they were pregnant, most of these people enter treatment with strong encouragement from those closest to them. Family members, who have learned from warning posters that drinking can harm the fetus, will help motivate the problem drinker to seek treatment. In addition, alcohol-related birth defects can occur in the offspring of moderate drinkers, who are also likely to be affected by warning posters. Studies have led the U.S. Surgeon General, the American Medical Association, and the March of Dimes to warn women to abstain completely from drinking during pregnancy.

MYTH: FAS and FAE occur early in the first trimester, before a woman knows she is pregnant, so the warning is too late to prevent damage to the fetus.

FACT: Researchers have not yet established any safe time to drink during pregnancy. One study shows that heavy drinkers who stopped drinking in the middle of the second trimester significantly improved their pregnancy outcomes. Another

study found that third-trimester drinking in monkeys cut off the oxygen supply to the fetus. Researchers believe that their findings demonstrate the benefit from abstaining from drinking during the third trimester. Finally, the fact that some women will find out about the danger of drinking late in their pregnancy or after their child is born further underscores the need to inform women before they become pregnant.

MYTH: Warning posters may scare pregnant women who drink – or mothers who drank during a previous pregnancy – and may result in hysteria or anxiety, or may even lead to abortions.

FACT: Testifying at a U.S. Senate hearing, Dr. Blume called this a "disturbing argument" that is based on a "typical archaic attitude that women are such nervous creatures and so untrustworthy that they cannot be trusted with the truth." The more widespread the educational effort becomes, the fewer uninformed women there will be who find out too late that their drinking has caused their children unnecessary and irreparable physical and mental trauma.

The National Organization for Women (NOW) and the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) have opposed warning poster legislation on the grounds that it discriminates against women. They argue that because alcohol causes a broad range of problems, only one of which involves pregnancy, singling out women and ignoring the other problems is unfair. NOW and the ACLU have not been successful in killing these bills, so it is unlikely that they will prevail in your community. In case they decide to oppose your effort, be prepared with the following arguments:

According to the U.S. Surgeon General, there is no known safe dose of alcohol during pregnancy, nor does there appear to be a safe time to drink during pregnancy. Research is just beginning on the affects of male alcohol consumption at the time of conception. It is important, however, to distinguish between genetic damage, which can result from male or female drinking at the time of conception, and drinking during pregnancy by a woman, which can cause birth defects.

All other drugs, including tobacco, carry appropriate warnings if they are known to harm the fetus. Alcohol is the only exception. Considering the large numbers of infants born each year with FAS and FAE, there is no reasonable basis for exempting alcohol from such regulations.

The federal government already requires a warning message on all cans and bottles of alcoholic beverages. We need to use all possible means to reinforce critical health messages about alcohol. Warning posters complement the health messages on alcoholic beverages. In bars and restaurants, where alcohol is sold by the glass, warning posters are the only way for consumers to get health information they need.

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"Statement of the Center of Science in the Public Interest," Hearing before the Committee on Governmental Affairs, U.S. Senate, June 16, 1988, Patricia Taylor.

H.R. 4493, a bill before the Committee on Energy and Commerce, House of Representatives, 101st Congress, 2nd Session.

"Activist's Guide," National Alcohol and Other Drug-Related Birth Defects Awareness Week, National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Inc., May 1990.

"Seventh Report to Congress on Alcohol and Health," U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, January 1990.

Appendix A

National Organizations Interested in Alcohol Problems

Advocacy Institute: Provides technical assistance and training in media advocacy activities. Write: 1730 Rhode Island Avenue, N.W., Suite 600, Washington, D.C. 20036. Call: (202) 659-8475.

American Academy of Family Physicians: Write: 2021 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. Call: (202) 232-9033.

American Academy of Pediatrics: Organization of 37,000 pediatricians dedicated to the health, safety, and well-being of infants, children, adolescents, and young adults. Write: 1331 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Suite 721 North, Washington, D.C. 20004-1703. Call toll-free: (800) 336-5475.

American Medical Association: Organization that works to preserve the art and science of medicine and protect the public health. Write: 535 North Dearborn St., Chicago, IL 60610. Call: (312) 464-5000.

Marin Institute for the Prevention of Alcohol and Other Drug Problems: Center for research and community action dedicated to reducing the toll of alcohol and other drug problems. Specializes in monitoring the activities of the alcohol industry. Write: 24 Belvedere St., San Rafael, CA 94901. Call: (415) 456-5962.

National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors (NASADAD): Non-profit organization composed of the directors of state alcoholism agencies. Committed to fostering and supporting the development of effective alcohol and drug abuse prevention and treatment programs. Write: 444 North Capitol St., N.W., Suite 530, Washington, D.C. 20001. Call: (202) 783-6868.

National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information (NCADI): Distributes information about alcohol and other drugs for the federal government. Write: Box 2345, Rockville, MD 20852. Call toll-free: (800) 729-6686.

National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (NCADD): Non-profit organization committed to combating alcoholism and other drug addictions. NCADD has affiliates in nearly 200 communities and provides information, referrals, literature, and other services. Look under NCADD in the phone book. Write: 12 West 21st Street, New York, NY 10010 or 1511 K Street, N.W., Suite 926, Washington, D.C. 20005. Call toll-free: (800) NCA-CALL.

National PTA: 6.8 million members consist of parents, teachers, and concerned citizens who work for policies that benefit and health and welfare of children. Write: 1201 16th Street, N.W., Suite 621, Washington, D.C. 20036. Call: (202) 822-7878.

Appendix B

FAS Warning Sign and Poster Laws

States and localities that require alcohol warning posters:

States

Georgia*, South Dakota, Maine (by Executive Order), California (under proposition 65), Utah, Nebraska, Delaware, Alaska, Illinois.

Cities and Counties

Washington, DC; Jacksonville, FL; Eustis, FL; Inverness, FL; Lady Lake, FL; Leesburg, FL; Lake County, FL; Umatilla, FL; Lexington-Fayette, KY; Oachita Parish, LA; Princeton, NJ; Albuquerque, NM; New York, NY*; Columbus, OH*; Lakewood, OH; Philadelphia, PA; Racine, WI.

* On the following pages are the laws enacted by Georgia; New York City, New York; and Columbus, Ohio. For copies of other laws, you can write to the local or state governmental bodies.

COLUMBUS, OHIO ORDINANCE

Resolution No. 85-15

A resolution to enact new Section 271 of the Columbus City Health Codes pertaining to a Sign Warning Against Consuming Alcoholic Beverages During Pregnancy.

WHEREAS, alcohol consumption during pregnancy may cause irreversible adverse effects on the developing fetus, including mental retardation, facial abnormalities, joint defects, and small size and weight, collectively known as Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS); and

WHEREAS, alcohol consumption during pregnancy is associated with a wide range of Fetal Alcohol Effects including a high ratio of miscarriage, low birth weight and size, childhood hyperactivity and individual features of FAS, and,

WHEREAS, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) and Fetal Alcohol Effects (FAE) can be prevented by abstinence from alcohol during pregnancy; and,

WHEREAS, information at the place of alcohol purchase will warn the general public and specifically, those most likely to need the information; now therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF HEALTH OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS:

Section 1. That a new Columbus City Health Code, Chapter 271 Sign Warning Against Consuming Alcoholic Beverages During Pregnancy be enacted as follows:

271.01 - DEFINITIONS

As used in this chapter, certain terms are defined as follows: (a) "Alcoholic beverage" means and includes alcohol, spirits, liquor, wine and beer, sold for human consumption.
(b) "Vendor" means any person who owns or operates

a business establishment such as a bar or restaurant, which sells at retail any alcoholic beverages for on-premise consumption; and any person who owns or operates a concession, or any other business which includes the retail sale of alcoholic beverages. "Vendor" shall include only food service operations and food establishments licensed by the Columbus Health Department under authority of ORC 3732.03 and Columbus City Health Code 255.02

271.02 - SIGN REQUIREMENTS

All vendors of alcoholic beverages shall have posted, in a conspicuous place, a white sign with black letters, measuring approximately 8½" x 11", provided by the Columbus Health Department; the sign will read "Warning: Drinking alcoholic beverages during pregnancy can cause birth defects."

271.03 - SIGN DISTRIBUTION

The Columbus Health Department shall make warning signs meeting the Sign Requirements 271.02 available to vendors of alcoholic beverages, and shall promulgate requirements with respect to the posting of said signs. A fee may be charged by the Columbus Health Department to cover printing, postage and handling expenses.

271.04 - ENFORCEMENT

Enforcement of this regulation shall fall under the authority of the Health Commissioner.

Section 2. That these changes shall take effect on September 2, 1985.

ADOPTED: June 19, 1985

RULES
OF
DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE
ALCOHOL AND TAX UNIT
CHAPTER 560-2-2
GENERAL PROVISIONS
TABLE CONTENTS

560-2-2-.42 Required Signs – Pregnancy Warning and Sales to Underage Persons

(1) Every retail consumption dealer and retail dealer selling beverage alcohol for consumption on the premises must display a sign warning that consumption of beverage alcohol during pregnancy can cause birth defects. The Department shall furnish such sign and sign furnished must be displayed, however nothing herein shall prohibit display of additional similar information. The warning sign shall be prominently displayed at or near the entrance to where beverage alcohol is consumed and shall be displayed in a readily visible, well lighted place, and safe from being defaced or destroyed. Should the sign be defaced or destroyed the licensee shall immediately request a replacement from the Commissioner or his agents. Retail dealers selling beverage alcohol in the unbroken package for consumption off the premises may display the warning sign.

2) Every retail consumption dealer and retail dealer shall post in a conspicuous place a notice containing provisions of the laws of this state regarding the unlawful sale or furnishing of beverage alcohol to persons under the lawful drinking age. The Department shall furnish such notice and the notice furnished must be displayed, however nothing herein shall prohibit display of additional similar information. This notice shall be prominently displayed in a readily visible, well lighted place, safe from being defaced or destroyed. Should the notice be defaced or destroyed the licensee shall immediately request a replacement from the Commissioner or his agents. Authority O.C.G.A. Secs. 48-12-2; 3-2-2; 3-1-5 and 3-3-24.2.

ADOPTED: July 28, 1986
State of Georgia

No. 63

To amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to requiring vendors of alcoholic beverages to post sign warning that consumption of alcohol during pregnancy is dangerous.

Be it enacted by the Council as follows:
Section one. Title A of chapter 22 of the administrative code of the city of New York is hereby amended by adding thereto a new section 569-1.0. to follow section 568-2.3. to read as follows:

569.1.0. Dangers of consuming alcoholic beverages during pregnancy: warning sign – a. For the purpose of this legislation, the following terms shall be defined and applied as follows.

1. "Alcoholic beverage" means and includes alcohol, spirits, liquor, wine and beer.

2. "Vendor" means any person who owns or operates a business establishment such as a bar or restaurant, which sells at retail any alcoholic beverages for on-premises consumption, and any person who owns or operates a liquor store, or any other business establishment which has as its primary purpose, the retail sale of alcoholic beverages.

b. All vendors of alcoholic beverages shall have posted, in a conspicuous place, a sign which clearly reads "Warning: Drinking alcoholic beverages during pregnancy can cause birth defects."

c. The department shall make such warning signs available to vendors of alcoholic beverages, and shall promulgate regulations with respect to the posting of said signs. A fee may be charged by the department to cover printing, postage and handling expenses.

d. Any violation of the provisions of this section or any of the regulations promulgated hereunder, shall be prosecuted as a civil violation subject to a penalty of a sum ranging from zero

to not more than one hundred dollars. A civil violation under this section, shall be adjudicated before the administrative tribunal of the department.

2. This local law shall take effect three months after its enactment.

THE CITY OF NEW YORK, OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK

Passed by City Council – November 15, 1983
Approved by Mayor – December 8, 1983

CSPI's Alcohol Policies Project
Publications Order Form

Tainted Booze ($4.95 each) $ _____

Marketing Booze to Blacks (book) ($4.95 each) $ _____

Marketing Booze to Blacks (video) ($29.95 for individuals and grassroots organizations, $79.95 for organizations with budgets over $50,000) $ _____

Marketing Disease to Hispanics ($6.95 each) $ _____

Alcohol Warning Signs: How to Get Legislation Passed in Your City, revised 1991, ($4.95 each) $ _____

Citizens' Action Handbook on Alcohol and Tobacco Billboard Advertising ($6.95 each) $ _____

Subtotal $ _____

Tax deductible donation $ _____

TOTAL $ _____

_____
Name

_____
Address

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City State Zip

( )_____
Telephone Number

☐ Keep me informed about specific actions I can take to change alcohol policies.

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